

March 30, 2005

District Health Honors Local Health Heroes

As part of celebrating National Public Health Month in April, South Central District Health announced today that a Hailey dentist, a high school health class, and a fitness center are being honored as 2005 Health Heroes.

The 2005 Health Heroes Awards were presented today during the South Central District Board of Health meeting in Twin Falls. Nominations were submitted by the community, and selection of Dr. Cynthia Unger, D.D.S., from Hailey, the Kimberly High School Advanced Health Class, and The Body Works in Buhl as Health Heroes was based on the breadth of their service and their on-going commitment to improving the health of south central Idaho residents.

Winner of the award for Adult Health Hero was Dr. Cynthia Unger, D.D.S., from Hailey. Dr. Unger has led the charge for several years to make sure that elementary school children in Blaine County, specifically 1st and 2nd graders, have dental screenings free of charge at school. She organizes and energizes area dentists to participate in the screenings. She is also willing to see a child in need at no charge or on a sliding fee scale to make sure they get the dental care they need.

“Dr. Unger’s dedicated work to help the children in her community serves as an inspiration to all of us,” said Dr. Donald Bard, Chairman of the Board of Health. “She is truly an advocate for children’s health.”

Selected as the 2005 Youth Health Heroes were the Kimberly High School Advanced Health Class and their teacher, Jan Hall. Concerned about students drinking too much soda and not getting enough calcium in their diet, students from the Advanced Health Class raised \$2,000 to purchase milk vending machines for the Kimberly High School and Middle Schools. These machines were purchased from the Idaho Dairy Council, and sell plain as well as flavored milk. The milk is so popular, “they can’t keep it in stock!”

“Thank you to the students at Kimberly High School and their advisor Jan Hall for bringing a healthy snack alternative to the students in their school system,” said Dr. Bard. “They are extremely deserving of being named 2005 Youth Health Heroes.”

Winner of the Corporate Health Hero award was The Body Works gym and fitness club in Buhl, owned by Tracy Hulse and Joan Hurlock. Since The Body Works opened in 2002, it has become a health-haven to over 200 patrons, including people from Buhl, Castleford, and Filer. The facility is open 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, via key-card. This is especially valuable to the hearty souls who begin their day at 4:30 a.m. by using the cardiovascular, strengthening, and

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stretching equipment. Trained staff members are on-site during prime-time hours for assistance, and for patrons with little ones in-tow, there is a secure child play area. The facility provides a safe place for patrons to exercise at convenient times.

“Your work has provided community members with a unique exercising and work-out center,” said Dr. Bard. “Thanks to The Body Works, citizens of Buhl and surrounding areas have a great place to get in shape and stay in shape.”

This is the seventh year District Health has recognized the contributions made by area individuals and groups to the health of south central Idaho residents. Award recipients in 2004 included Adult Health Hero Ketchum attorney Reginald “Reggie” Reeves who helps link people with limited resources to the health services they need. The Mini-Cassia HealthNet Coalition was named the Youth Health Hero for their numerous contributions to the communities of Burley and Rupert over the past several years. And, the Corporate Health Hero Award went to the Main Motion Dance and Fitness Studio in Oakley, owned by sisters Annalee Elquist and Tasha Payton, which offers a wide variety of exercise classes in the rural town.

Award recipients in 2003 included Adult Health Hero Gooding Police Chief Paul Brown worked to improve the safety and health of the residents of Gooding. The Youth Health Hero Award in 2003 went to the Blaine County Teen Advisory Council (BC TAC). And the 2003 Corporate Health Hero was the Twin Falls Times-News, selected for its promotion and support of youth as the community’s most valuable resource.

Honorees in 2002 included Adult Health Hero Sherri Massie, an HIV-positive woman who works to inform her community about HIV prevention; Youth Health Hero Jeremy Ricondo, a Minico High School student who was the first youth member of the Rupert City Council; and the Twin Falls Lions Club, selected as the Corporate Health Hero for their work to help people receive the vision care they would otherwise not be able to afford.

Honorees in 2001 included Adult Health Hero Dr. David McClusky, long-time Twin Falls physician and surgeon; Youth Health Hero Shaylee O’Connor of Buhl, for her role in the Magic Valley Tobacco Free Coalition; and Corporate Health Hero KMVT Television, for their support of the Youth Asset Building Initiative by providing production and airtime for youth-generated public service announcements. Award winners in 2000 included Jan Mittleider, Associate Professor of Physical Education and Wellness Coordinator at CSI, and Lauri Bailey and her students at the Cassia County Education Center in Burley. In 1999, Con Paulos and Subway Sandwiches received the award for providing healthy fast food alternatives.

Side Bar 1

What Does South Central District Health Do in Your Community?

- **Keep you safe from every day health threats.** District Health guards the safety of the tap water you drink, the restaurant food you eat, and the clean air you breathe, as well as responding quickly to health emergencies and preventing disease.
- **Ensure the health of entire towns, cities, and counties.** When a contagious disease or epidemic threatens your community, District Health joins forces with other agencies, organizations, schools, businesses, and the media to quickly stop it from spreading.
- **Educate you and your neighbors about good health.** District Health provides information to help you make healthy decisions every day, like exercising more, eating right, quitting smoking, and washing your hands to keep you from spreading illness.
- **Keep everyone healthy.** District Health makes sure that everyone – no matter who they are – has access to preventive care they need to help maintain their health.

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